

STATOTHR

Telegraph Approved For Release 2003/01/30 : CIA-RDP80R01731R00020008003885 40091, STATOTHR

Executive Registry  
11-4729

# The Hindustan Times

PREMIER NATIONAL DAILY OF INDIA

CHIEF EDITOR

Connaught Circus, New Delhi-1

2, KEELING LANE  
NEW DELHI

May 22, 1959.

PERSONAL

Dear Mr. Dulles,

You may recall the long talk I had in your room in October 1957 when we exchanged views on the situation in the world in the light of my visit to Russia and Europe. This meeting arose out of the talk I had with the Secretary for Treasury, Mr. Anderson.

The series of articles I wrote were published in a book called "INDIA & THE WORLD". I sent you a copy of the book and hope you had an opportunity to glance through it.

I am undertaking another quick global tour. This time I have reversed the order. I start with Manila and Tokyo and after going through Washington, London, Bonn I visit Warsaw and Moscow. It is important I should know the Western mind before I reach Moscow and assess their reactions. The situation in Asia is both difficult and delicate. I am very keen to exchange views with you on the subject and hear your assessment of the situation in the West and the world generally. I hope you will find time for me and let me know when I can see you. I enclose a copy of my travel schedule.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

*Durga Das*

— (DURGA DAS)

Mr. Allen Dulles,  
Head of the C.I.A.,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ENCLO:

STAT

Approved For Release 2003/01/30 : CIA-RDP80R01731R000200080038-5

Mr. Durga Das has decided to take a quick global tour. This is to enable him to gather latest trends in foreign affairs in important capitals of the world such as Tokyo, Washington, Ottawa, London, Bonn, Warsaw and Moscow. He is also concerned with urgent professional problems and wishes to make enquiries into practices in other countries.

He is particularly anxious to study the publisher-editor-worker relationship in the newspaper industry. He is the President of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference and the slogan he has raised is that the freedom of the editor is the core of the freedom of the Press. He suggested a line of demarcation between the proprietors, editors and workers and the last conference held in Trivandrum, capital of Red-governed Kerala State, at the end of April, adopted a resolution laying down an editor's charter.

The Conference, it may be mentioned, was inaugurated by the President of the Indian Union, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who flew down specially for this purpose to Trivandrum. What the editors' conference wishes to make sure is that the editor is free from pressures in the discharge of his duties. Such pressures may be from Government, from proprietor, from advertizers, from political parties or from trade unions.

Mr. Durga Das wishes that during his tenure of office he may help to stabilize the authority and position of the editor for on that depends the success of democracy. He is hoping to establish contacts with various persons in countries he visits and gather information of value.

Mr. Durga Das is also interested in finding out from Press Clubs as to how they are being organised and financed. The Press Club of India was inaugurated four months ago by Pandit Pant, the Union Home Minister. It already has membership of 250 including both Indian and foreign newspapermen.

Mr. Durga Das is the founder-president of the Press Club. He would like to gather information on working of Press Clubs abroad in order to get ideas on how to develop the Press Club of India into an organization worthy of the capital of India.

Mr. Durga Das also intends to make enquiries regarding privileges of legislature vis-a-vis the Press. There have been instances recently of certain legislatures in India taking objection to publication in the press on the ground that they constitute a breach of privilege. Since India is working under a Parliamentary system of Government these enquiries will be largely made in areas where such a system prevails.

Mr. Durga Das will be grateful for any assistance that may be rendered in making his mission a success.

Mr. Durga Das, Chief Editor of the HINDUSTAN TIMES, New Delhi, is the most widely travelled and most experienced Indian Editor, having gone overseas nine times. Of his 40 years in active journalism he has spent 19 years as a news agency man and 21 years as a newspaper man. He has spent almost equal number of years in three distinct spheres of journalism, news, features and comments.

Mr. Durga Das now wears a triple crown - a unique distinction. He is currently the President of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference, President of the Press Club of India and Chairman, Press Gallery Committee of India's Parliament.

Mr. Durga Das began his journalistic career with Reuter, and its Indian subsidiary, the Associated Press of India, now the Press Trust of India. As its Chief news and Parliamentary correspondent he scored three world scoops - the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, the bomb outrage in Indian Legislative Chamber and the resolution declaring independence as the goal of Indian National Congress. He covered for Reuter's world service the tour of the Simon Commission on Indian reforms.

Mr. Durga Das also worked as political commentator on Indian affairs for all the leading Indian newspapers while in Reuter's employ.

It was this activity which brought him into clash with the then British Government in 1937. He resigned his post rather than give up the side-activity. He was thereupon engaged by the British-owned "STATESMAN" of Calcutta-Delhi as its Political Correspondent and leader-writer and accredited to the Government of India. He was the first Indian to hold this responsible assignment in the "STATESMAN". During the last war the TIMES OF INDIA, then British-owned, arranged with the STATESMAN to share Mr. Durga Das' services as most of their senior British staff had been drafted during the war.

In April 1944, the HINDUSTAN TIMES engaged Mr. Durga Das as Joint Editor. He held this post for 14 years in collaboration with Mr. Devadas Gandhi, then Managing Editor. On the death of Mr. Devadas Gandhi in August 1957 Mr. Durga Das became the paper's Chief Editor.

He undertook a world tour in 1957 and wrote 33 articles. These have been published in a book "INDIA & THE WORLD" which has run to two editions. The President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, has written a Foreword to the book and it contains laudatory messages from Mr. Ellsworth Bunker, U.S. Ambassador in India, Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, U.K. High Commissioner in India, Mr. Chester Ronning, High Commissioner for Canada and Dr. Nasu, Ambassador for Japan in India.

These articles were circulated to friends abroad and those dealing with cold war politics were published by the Westminster Press group in Britain, by the JAPAN TIMES in Tokyo and by a leading paper in Australia, the NEWS Adelaide.

Mr. Durga Das gained fame as a columnist for his weekly column POLITICAL DIARY by "INSAF" which was particularly looked forward to by diplomats and foreign correspondents for political trends and inside information. He ran this column for about a decade.

Mr. Durga Das first visited Europe in 1931 to study the working of the Press and Parliamentary institutions and assess

-2-

the chances of the success of the Round Table Conference. His articles written at the time for the NEWS CHRONICLE, headed "GANDHI IS NOT A JOKE", and another in SPECTATOR, headed "INDIA AND GOODWILL", made a profound impression in political quarters in London.

Mr. Durga Das visited the Middle East, Italy and the U.K. during the second World War as a leading member of an Editors' delegation. His 10,000-words article written after his trip led to a debate in the Indian Legislative Assembly and a censure of the Government's treatment of Indian soldiers. He also visited war-devastated Europe in the summer of 1945 and wrote articles which proved prophetic as fulfilling his estimate of the time Germany would take to be on its feet again.

Mr. Durga Das was one of the six editors nominated by the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference to attend the Commonwealth Press Conference in Ottawa in 1950. He was the author of the important resolution on exchange of journalists adopted at the conference.

These Indian delegates also visited the U.S.A. at the invitation of the U.S. Government. The articles he wrote on return to India were published as "A REPORT ON AMERICA" and won much applause for their objectivity and fair play from such discerning Americans as Mr. Loy Henderson and Mr. Robert Trumble, the then New Delhi correspondent of the NEW YORK TIMES.

Mr. Durga Das toured 8,000 miles in India in 1956 to see community development projects and assess life at the grass-roots. His articles have been published in a pamphlet entitled - "RAM RAJYA IN ACTION" - and widely publicized.

Mr. Durga Das was nominated by the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference as one of its two delegates to the Indo-Pakistan Press Consultative Committee set up in 1949-51 to improve relations between the two countries.

During his last world tour in 1957 Mr. Durga Das met President Eisenhower, Mr. Harold Macmillan and Mr. Kishi and leading political personalities in the countries he visited. He made contacts with Mr. Khruschev during the Russian leader's visit to India, and his assessment of trends in Russia published by the "NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE" on October 26, 1957 was later endorsed by the impressions formed by Walter Lippman and Adlai Stevenson.

Mr. Durga Das presided over the 14th session of the All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference held at Trivandrum on April 30 and May 1, 1959. The Conference which was inaugurated by the President of Indian Republic, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, adopted an editors' charter to make sure that the editor is free from pressures in the discharge of his duties.

Mr. Durga Das has been Chairman of the Press Gallery Committee of India's Parliament since 1951.